

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, EPAP, ELAB, CH

SUBJECT: STATE COUNCIL REAFFIRMS THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF SIDELINE
PRODUCTION BY INDIVIDUAL FARMER

REF: HONG KONG 14367, DECEMBER 10, 1976

SUMMARY: A STATE COUNCIL CIRCULAR SEPTEMBER 10 ON AGRICULTURAL
SIDELINE PRODUCTION IS ANOTHER STEP IN THE PRC'S EFFORTS
TO INCREASE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION BY CONFIRMING PEASANTS'
RIGHTS TO PURSUE CERTAIN INDIVIDUAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES.
END SUMMARY.

1. NCNA REPORTED SEPTEMBER 14 THAT THE STATE COUNCIL
ISSUED A CIRCULAR SEPTEMBER 10 ON AGRICULTURAL SIDELINE
PRODUCTION (I.E., THE PRODUCTION OF MINOR CROPS, INCLUDING
PRODUCTION ON PRIVATE PLOTS, AND THE RAISING OF DOMESTIC
ANIMALS, SUCH AS PIGS, DUCKS, CHICKENS AND RABBITS). THE
CIRCULAR INSTRUCTED ALL PROVINCES, MUNICIPALITIES AND
AUTONOMOUS REGIONS TO REAP A "MINOR AUTUMN HARVEST" BY
MOBILIZING FARMERS TO COLLECT WILD HERBS AND PLANTS AND TO
HUNT WILD ANIMALS.

2. THE CIRCULAR INSTRUCTED LOCAL TO PLAN THE COLLECTIVE
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HARVESTING OF SUCH CROPS, BUT ADDED THAT "AFTER COLLECTIVE
HARVESTING, COMMUNE MEMBERS SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO COLLECT THE
LEFTOVERS IN THEIR SPARE TIME OR HOLIDAY TIME AND SELL THEM.
THEY SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DO THE SAME WITH PLANTS THAT GROW IN
SCATTERED AREAS THAT DO NOT SUIT COLLECTIVE HARVESTING... SUPPLY
AND MARKETING COOPERATIVES AND OTHER COMMERCIAL DEPARTMENTS
SHOULD ACTIVELY BUY THE PRODUCE AND PAY CASH TO WHOMEVER

SELLS IT."

3. COMMENT: THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF SIDELINE PRODUCTION IN CHINA, INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE. INDIVIDUAL SIDELINE PRODUCTION ACCOUNTS FOR APPROXIMATELY 25 PERCENT OF CHINA'S TOTAL AGRICULTURAL OUTPUT; THE "GANG OF FOUR" VILIFIED IT AS "SUPPLYING BLOOD TO CAPITALISM." A SHORT COMMENTARY IN THE JULY 21 PEOPLE'S DAILY DEFENDED INDIVIDUAL SIDELINE PRODUCTION BY STATING "IT IS INCORRECT TO CONSIDER SIDELINE PRODUCTION BY COMMUNE FAMILIES A CAPITALIST TREND AND CRITICIZE IT. AS LONG AS OUR COUNTRY'S COLLECTIVE ECONOMY IS NOT STRONG ENOUGH AND ITS PRODUCTS ARE NOT VARIED ENOUGH, SIDELINE PRODUCTION BY COMMUNE FAMILIES WILL PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY." THE SEPTEMBER 10 STATE COUNCIL INSTRUCTION FURTHER REASSURES THE CHINESE FARMER THAT HE CAN ENGAGE IN PRIVATE PRODUCTION. WITHOUT BECOMING THE TARGET OF AN IDEOLOGICAL ATTACK.

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